

602 the mother who bore me and the consideration naturally expected
 592 from her cannot, in the nature of things, be given or received
 by all of the elder and younger mothers in exactly equal degree,
 but the type of behaviour is similar. The elder sister who carried
 her younger brother about on her back when she herself could
 hardly more than walk, or the elder brother who first taught his
 younger brother to make and set his little traps, has a warmth of
 regard which he cannot extend with just the same force to fifty
 or one hundred younger brothers, but nevertheless the pattern will
 be of the same sort if and when similar opportunity offers. The
 same may be said for the younger and the elder fathers, and again
 605 for the *tatekâi*, the 'female father'. But here elements other than
 604 the early household patterns enter as also with *manu*, the mother's
 brother. Chief of these other elements is the fact that these two
 classes of relatives, together with the *va cepua*, i.e. cross-cousins
 (mostly children of the *manu* and *tatekâi* classes), and also the
ocimumba (plural) (one's own nephews along similar lines of
 descent), are all potential spouses or potential relatives-in-law.¹
 The relations of *ocimumba* (sister's son) and *manu* (mother's
 brother) in Umbundu society follow a pattern not exactly like any
 other set of relationships in any society of which I know. Sugges-
 tions of this have already been given. The *manu* shares his sister's
 desire for the advancement of her son, and if the nephew has had
 a part of his education in the uncle's home or on his trading
 expeditions, the relationship will have become closer. It may be,
 however, that the uncle's own difficulties may lead him to exploit
 his nephew rather than to attend only to his advancement.² The
 602 ties of the paternal group tend to be strengthened at the expense
 178 of the maternal family and it seems that the increasing localiza-
 tion of the Umbundu family with the supplanting of trade by
 agriculture (as a man's full-time occupation) has furthered this
 process.

602 It is very important for one who would understand the Ovi-
 mbundu to look upon the Umbundu kinship structure with the
 eyes of an Ocimbundu. If one brought up to other ideas and other
 relationships finds this difficult, that is all the more reason for
 making the effort. I cannot better summarise the Umbundu

¹ See *infra*, pp. 32 ff.

² This is one of several points where the commercial tendencies seem to come
 into conflict with the patterns of the kinship group.

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Table A indicates a wide use of the word *nawa* for "in laws" of the speaker's generation. Thus Ngonga calls the wives and husbands of his brothers and sisters *nawa* without distinguishing them in any way. The term *nawa* has a still wider connotation for it includes Ngonga's father's brother's son's wife, and his father's sister's daughter's husband. Ngonga's wife said that she uses the word *nawa* for all the brothers and sisters of her husband, for all the children of her husband's father's brother, her husband's father's sister's children, her husband's mother's brother's children, and her husband's mother's sister's children. Reciprocally, all these people call Ngonga's wife *nawa*.

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Table A introduces the question of cross-cousin marriage, which is the functional form among the Ovimbundu. My informant said that he calls his mother's sister's children brothers and sisters, therefore he could not marry the girls. Neither are his father's brother's daughters eligible for marriage with him. The table shows the truth of this, for Ngonga calls his father's brother's daughter *mukai*, meaning "sister"; she addresses him as *kota* or *husa* ("brother"). Ngonga also addresses his father's brother's son by the term *wanjange* ("younger brother") or *husonge* ("older brother") according to the relative ages of the speaker and the person addressed.

When Ngonga was asked whether he could marry a daughter of his mother's brother, he replied, "I could marry her very well indeed." A marriage of Ngonga with his father's sister's daughter would be permissible but Ngonga said the marriage is not regarded as a good one "because the children will be stupid." Ngonga could marry his mother's brother's daughter's daughter, or his mother's brother's son's daughter. It would also be permissible for Ngonga to marry his father's sister's daughter's daughter, or his father's sister's son's daughter.

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Ngonga said, "My father's brother is my father, and my mother's sister is my mother." When questioned further my informant said that a marriage with daughters of these relatives would make him *ocimongo*, which means "an animal." Relatives would say, "You have shamed the family." It will be noted from Table B, First Generation of Ngonga's Ascendants, that Ngonga's father's brother calls him *omolepe*, meaning "my child," for which the reciprocal is *isi* ("father"). Ngonga's father's brother's wife is *mai* ("mother"), and she calls him *omolepe* ("my child"). Ngonga distinguishes between his mother's oldest sister (*mai yabala*), and his mother's

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621 On the village level, however, the importance of the mother's brother tie and of the tie between matrilineal 'brothers' becomes very apparent. None of Sapapula's four sons had settled in Epalanga, and his only classificatory 'son' was Gonçalve, own son to Mwembo, Sapapula's matrilineal 'brother'. Seven household heads were sister's sons of Sapapula. This trend for matrilineal ties to predominate is marked also in Katembo and Mbunga, but less evident at Belem. Indeed, 'neo-matrilinearity' as a principle of village structure may be a general and not simply a local feature of Umbundu society, since Mr. C. M. N. White¹² has found that the settlements of Ovimbundu within Northern Rhodesia are marked by a predominance of matrilineal ties. This is referable to the contemporary kinship system in which the father-son tie is predominantly a personal one, with a limited extension of attitudes to classificatory fathers, whereas a man's relation with a mother's brother seems little affected by the question of genealogical distance. Perhaps the relations between the group of agnatic kin were so closely tied to the old village structure that when it broke up it disintegrated also the wider agnatic ties. Yet at the same time such matrilineal institutions as matrilineal inheritance and the non-repayment of loans among matrilin have weakened or disappeared.

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[582] Running counter to this principle of settling in the village of a senior kinsman who is likely to belong to one's matrilin, is the principle of cross-cousin marriage. 'If you have married your cross-cousin when your son grows up he will see a cross-cousin here, a cross-cousin there, and so he will stay.' That is, a man will stay in his father's village not simply by virtue of the father-son tie but because he will be surrounded by kinmen. [603] The relation between cross-cousins is one of equality and solidarity, expressed in joking and in burial services. To say that one stays in a place because one has cross-cousins at hand is to [602] indicate an ideal of equal relations with a circle of kinmen rather than attachment to the following of an important kinsman.

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602 These two principles co-exist in actual social life. A man will recognize and respect a number of senior kinmen living in his

¹² In letters.

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607 have a kinsman's obligation to lend money in case of need if he has it, and it is said that one should only work very occasionally with a brother-in-law. When I asked which a woman preferred, her husband or her brother, men told me that she liked both equally, and the fact that a man and his wife's brother often live close together confirms that there is relatively little for them to quarrel over. A woman does not establish close ties with any of her affines. Formerly, when a man died leaving a widow (and according to some informants a small child) a patrilineal cross-cousin of his might marry her. My informants, however, denied that a sororate had existed even in the past.⁸⁷

605 Cross-cousins are the relatives with whom solidarity is most strongly felt. When I asked about the relationship between full siblings I was told 'They like each other just as cross-cousins do.' Now that it is no longer customary for agnatic kin to live together, it is often said that it is good to live near cross-cousins.

608 Formerly funeral friendship (*sakwajisako*) was part of an alliance between sub-chiefdoms, which were not contiguous. Nowadays, since people move about the country, funeral friendships may be regarded as another category of kinship—when one asks a man his relationship with somebody else this may be given. There is a tendency to regard *sakwajisako*, funeral friends, as being a sort of cross-cousins since both perform funeral services. This survival of funeral friendship, as a tie between individuals and as a haphazard means of supplying undertakers, exists in Gumba. In Ndjandju, which is the sub-chiefdom in which the Misão Católica de Bimbe is built, the *gisako* relationship is now established between two neighbouring villages and is apparently the normal means of performing burials, and the permitted theft of small livestock regularly takes place.

606 Between parents-in-law and children-in-law the relation was and is one of restraint. This is most marked in the relations between in-laws of opposite sex, and least between the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law.

⁸⁷ See Abilio Alves under *(s)akwajisako*, for evidence of a sororate in some Ovimbundu areas.